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COMMITTEE HEARING

SSCI Box 239, Folder 14

Wednesday, May 21, 1975

Washington, D. C.

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410 FIRST STREET, S. E.
WASHINGTON, D. C. 20003

(202) 544-6000

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the first man contacted by Mr. Maheu, worked through a Cuban exile leader. And he offered -- and he said that he could do something of this nature provided he got some funds and the assistance. And he was supported in this regard. And I think again we have some doubts as to the accuracy of his reporting.

Mr. Schwarz. In November 1961 did Mr. Bissell indstruct a William Harvey to take charge of the gambling syndicate operation designed to kill Fidel Castro? Page 3 of Mr. Greer's report, which is at the beginning of your report.

Mr. Colby. I believe so, yes.

Yes. That is what our evidence says, the summary sais, "of the evidence available". And this is the evidence available in 1963. And there have been some minor changes in some of the details of this summary, very minor changes. But the essence of this report is still roughly accurate, I believe.

Mr. Schwarz. Mr. Harvey -- was Mr. Harvey the man that had hired an agent in order to kill Lmumba?

Mr. Colby. Mr. Harvey was the head of Staff D, Staff D of the Operations directorate [redacted]

1(B)

[redacted] and in the process, you obviously work up some people who are able to do this kind of work, which is quite different from the normal life style of most of us.

Mr. Harvey had been a very venturesome officer in the past. He was responsible for the Berlin tunnel. And he was sent down to take this job. And he assumed as part of it the capability of -- he was given by Mr. Bissel this chore of carrying on this particular operation as well.

Mr. Schwarz. Had he been the person who had, in connection with the abortive effort to kill Mr. Lmumba, hired an agent for that purpose?

Mr. Colby. I have forgotten whether he hired him. He hired a foreigner. And this foreigner's job -- [redacted]. And there are some very obscure references that an additional assignment was to look into the possible assassination of Mr. Lmumba. The evidence is that he went down to what is now Kinshasa, Elizabethville in 1960, stayed there a few weeks, and left in October, I believe. And then Mr. Lmumba was killed thereafter in a totally separate set of circumstances in which we had nothing to do. There is some indication that a CIA officer who was asked to have something to do with this particular job said he did not want to do it. 1(B)

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was not advised of the assassination activities. Quite likely I cannot say that for sure, but I know the compartmentation system was such.

Chairman Church. What was the name of the CIA agent who was given the responsibility for liaison between the CIA and the Warren Commission?

Mr. Colby. To my knowledge it is Mr. Raymond Rocca.

Chairman Church. Where is it now?

Mr. Colby. He retired at the end of December of last year. He remained working for us for a few months. I think he is retired. I think he is retired. I believe he is still in the Washington area.

Mr. Knoche. Yes, he is still working with us.

Mr. Colby. Still working with us to help on the transition of the whole counter intelligence program.

Chairman Church. Why did he retire?

Mr. Colby. That was the Angleton case, Mr. Chairman, and the facts of that case were that I had had some professional differences in the organization with Mr. Angleton as to the way the counterintelligence business was run [redacted]. I believed that it required a higher degree of coordination of the other elements of the Directorate and of the Agency. We had debated this on various occasions in the past. I did reorganize that staff in 1973 and took a number of functions away from it. The liaison with the

FBi for instance, and a couple of other things. [redacted] 1(b)

Mr. Angleton [redacted].

[redacted]. 1(b)

Also, I believed that there was a undue degree of compartmentation of that staff, that it needed more interchange with our other divisions. We debated this and discussed it and I set as my time limit for this discussion the end of December because there were some very substantial retirement benefits that people would loose if they stayed after that point. Then unfortunately the Seymour Hirsh article of December 22nd came to our attention before it was actually published, and so I brought Mr. Angleton up and said that I was going to make two basic decisions. [redacted] 1(b) I was going to put some sucessor leadership into the Head of the Counterintelligence Staff. I said I would offer him a post of tying together some counterintelligence doctrine, he could stay working with us. He did not have to

Chinese Communists subsequently blamed the Chinese Nationalists and the US for sabotaging the aircraft. The aircraft employee had fled to Taiwan. We had nothing to do with that incident and frankly heard about it after it occurred.

In the fall of 1956, a senior Chinese Nationalist official informed an officer of CIA that a Chinese National planned to assassinate Chou En Lai during his visit to Cambodia in November '56 and had been thwarted by the Cambodian arrest of the Chinese Nationalist officer sent to Phnom Penh to supervise the attempt. We learned of this after it had happened and we had nothing to do with it.

[redacted] Intelligence Service over the [redacted] 1(b)

These are two that were separate.

Also I was asked to look at the photographs of Howard Hunt and Sturgis that appeared in Newsweek some years ago. We obtained this photograph from the FBI last night about 5 o'clock. We had not had it before. We had a copy of the Newsweek edition.

These are photographs of Howard Hunt in 1949, 1950 and 1961. This is the only photograph we have of Mr. Sturgis. It is taken out of the Newsweek.

We have had no connection with Mr. Sturgis and so we have

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individuals in it.

Senator Schweiker. Did you get the other photograph, the supposed Oswald photograph leaving the Embassy?

Mr. Colby. I don't have that with me. It is in the Warren Commission published report. It is in there.

Senator Schweiker. It is in there?

Mr. Colby. Yes. It was cropped slightly in order to conceal where it was taken but it was --

Senator Schweiker. It is in the Warren Commission?

Mr. Colby. Yes, it is in the Warren Commission.

Just one additional matter.

Chairman Church. Just one thing I would like to say to you, Mr. Colby, before I forget it. [redacted] 1(d)

Mr. Colby. Right.

Chairman Church. And I think you should prepare to discuss it with us and we will have further questions to ask you in connection with it.

I just wanted to give you notice.

Mr. Colby. Right. In our lexicon it doesn't count as a covert action but that is all right, no problem, I will cover it.

them.

Mr. Harvey was given the responsibility of this by Mr. Bissel and originally it continued as a separate action from the Castro operation, but Mr. Harvey was also given that responsibility, and for all intents and purposes they became wedded.

Mr. Helms was the person who formally approved ZR Rifle as a project. ZR Rifle had a dual purpose that has not been clarified by our inquiry. It apparently was in fact used for the stated purposes, as far as organizational activities went along, which was to steal codes, and Mr. Helms, when he approved the project, authorized accounting on certification, which meant that rather than the usual vouchers supporting expenditures, that the officer involved would simply certify that the money had been spent and this would be accepted. It had a project amount of some dollars, $7500 - $10,000 -- some of it to include the salary of an agent, some to include operating expenses.

So Mr. Helms' main appearance in the approval of ZR Rifle does not necessarily equate with the date when he became familiar with the Castro operation.

Mr. Schwarz. Because of the dual purpose of Rifle, Rifle means both, rifle files and used rifles?

Mr. Breckinridge. It may mean either or both.

Mr. Colby. It is supposed to disassociate but sometimes

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Mr. Schwarz. November 1961?

Mr. Breckinridge. I think that is probably correct. It was in the fall of 1961 that Mr. Harvey was given this assignment by Mr. Bissel. I think Mr. Bissel left in 1962. I am not sure of the dates, So Mr. Bissel would have known at that time. But I am not sure after that.

Chairman Church. Helms succeeded Mr. Bissel as chief of operations?

Mr. Colby. Deputy Director of Plans.

Chairman Church. Deputy Director for Plans.

Your record shows that Helms had knowledge of the ZR Rifle operation, which, among other things, was to develop an executive capability -- whatever that means. Presumably that means a capability to conduct an assassination if and when authorized by proper authority?

Mr. Breckinridge. That is my understanding.

Chairman Church. Is that your understanding?

Mr. Breckinridge. Yes, sir.

Chairman Church. Do your records show that, or is that based upon what has been revealed through your interrogation?

Mr. Breckinridge. First, let me go back and clarify, then I will answer this question, if I may.

Mr. Helms approved ZR Rifle, [redacted] 1(b)

My understanding, from my interviews, is that ZR Rifle had

Chairman Church. Senator Hart.

Senator Hart of Colorado. Mr. Colby, in connection with ZR Rifle, I think you testified or your associate said this was a multi-purpose operation, [redacted] and the development of the capability of what euphemistically is called executive action. 1(B)

In your professional judgment, and with your history of your background in the Agency, does it make any sense to you that a major operation, a major intelligence gathering operation [redacted] would be mounted under the direction of a man about whom all I know is that Mr. Harvey has a background of something like a soldier of fortune, and funded at the level, I should say, of $7500 to $10,000? 1(B)

Does it not suggest to you that [redacted] was in fact an internal cover for what was explicitly an assassination operation with unlimited, non-voucher financial capability? 1(B)

Mr. Colby. No, not that it is purely a cover.

In the first place, Mr. Harvey had a very successful tour in Berlin where he ran the Berlin tunnel operation, which was one of our major successful intelligence operations.

Mr. Harvey was a very colorful figure who had his lifestyle, which is different than some others, but he had been very effective at that, [redacted] and a very venturesome idea of that nature. 1(B)

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He was in the assignment of Chief of the FI Division staff. [redacted] 1(B)

1(B)

Now, the thing that puts it together with this "capability", executive action, is the high degree of compartmentation of this material, that kind of a project. [redacted] 1(B)

Therefore, there is a system of very sharp compartmentation of the work of that particular group.

You also are dealing with some very venturesome people [redacted] 1(B)

So, given you have a man who had some good technical experience, who is a venturesome type himself and is running a program which is not too far off the requirements of high compartmentation, and a very high risk kind of operation, and therefore, for Mr. Bissel to have selected Harvey to carry out this project seems to me that it is compatible [redacted]

as well as this other activity.

Now, in the lifestyle at the time, not mentioning the second one, this gets back into the recordkeeping that we have been discussing. It was not to be put on the record although to be done. That is a perfectly proper hypothesis, it seems to me, but to say that [redacted] was only a cover I think is probably an unwarranted conclusion. 1B

Senator Hart of Colorado. What about the level of funding of $7,500 to $10,000?

Mr. Colby. That is not very much money for that kind of an operation.

Senator Hart of Colorado. Precisely. I think it is too little.

Mr. Colby. No. For a capability of that nature, it is largely a staff operation. In other words, you use your own staff officers. You may hire an agent or something, but I don't think you can draw much conclusion from the actual number on the figure one way or the other.

This might not have been the only such project. You know, an assassination project would cost you more money than that, too.

Senator Hart of Colorado. Absolutely.

Mr. Colby. I find it hard to say that that is the only amount of money involved. I think you get into a situation where additional money would be put into either of those kinds

Chairman Church. Before you do, would you just explain exactly what the relationship between CIA and Giancana and Maheu was because that is not clear in my mind.

Would you develop for the Committee that whole relationship?

Mr. Breckinridge. Robert Maheu used to work for the FBI and he resigned from the FBI and opened a private investigative firm here in Washington and CIA used him from time to time for certain kinds of support activities.

Chairman Church. What kind of support activities?

Mr. Breckinridge. On one occasion he obtained a female companion [redacted] 1(B)

Chairman Church. What other kind of support?

Mr. Breckinridge. In the early days -- and this becomes an embarrassment. As nearly as I can reconstruct, the people who knew him decided to put him on a retainer in the Office of Security, which they did for awhile, until he was so successful he said he no longer needed the retainer, which he didn't do much to earn. He later got involved representing one of the Greek shipping interests and we were given the results of some of the information that he obtained from that where there was a fight between Niarchos and Onassis. We think he may have had some involvement in another [redacted] companionship when he was in this country. I don't have the details. I think we can probably reconstruct it for you.

Mr. Schwarz. I would like to pick up on the discussion we had.

Chairman Church. Mr. Schwarz has five minutes more, and we will conclude, and I would like to ask the Committee to stay on for ten more minutes for an executive session.

Mr. Schwarz. In the discussion we had on the use of criminal elements, we have dealt with the Castro operation.

In the middle of the book supplied to us by Mr. Breckinridge earlier this week, there is a discussion about the Lumumba operation, and the Agent Q. J. Win.

Now, is it a fact that Q. J. Win was the agent, or asset, however you would refer to him, who apparently was considered for the effort to assassinate Lumumba, which never took place; is that right?

Mr. Colby. Yes, sir.

Mr. Schwarz. Now, is it accurate that Q. J. Win operated [redacted] 1(B)

Mr. Colby. This is what is reported, and it is quite possible.

Mr. Breckinridge. The record indicates that.

Mr. Schwarz. And is it further so that one of the CIA officers who first met Q. J. Win [redacted] 1(B)

Mr. Colby. Yes, that is what it says.